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UNCLAS ANKARA 002781

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR PRM/ANE, EUR/SE AND NEA/NGA
DEPT PASS USAID FOR BHA/OFDA - WGARVELINK
EUCOM FOR JE, JR, J5, SOJ7 AND POLAD
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KUWAIT FOR HOC AND MDRO

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAID](#) [MOPS](#) [IZ](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: TFIZ01: Turkish Red Crescent Aid Shipment En
Route to Baghdad En

Ref: Ankara 2660

(SBU) Early on April 29, Feza Ozturk, Department Head for International Political Organizations, contacted Mission Disaster Relief Officer (MDRO) to advise that the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) convoy delivering medicines, food and water to hospitals in Iraq had changed its destination and would now deliver supplies directly to unspecified hospitals in Baghdad. TRC had previously planned to deliver relief supplies directly to hospitals in Kirkuk and Mosul, although this was not coordinated with ICRC. Embassy had passed this itinerary to the Kuwait Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC) on April 24 and 25. Instead, TRC delivered two truckloads of supplies to one hospital in Kirkuk, and decided early on April 29 to proceed to hospitals in Baghdad the same day. MFA and TRC told us this had been done with the approval of U.S. military forces on the ground, but Embassy and Task Force North have not been able to verify this. We also advised MFA and TRC that Baghdad was not a permissive environment and that the convoy would be exposing itself to considerable risks. Ozturk told MDRO that as of about 17:30 local time, the convoy, with five truckloads of supplies, was approximately 60 kilometers from Baghdad and was accompanied by a U.S. escort. TRC confirmed this information, and said they had the permission of a General McDonald or MacDonald to proceed. He said the TRC planned to deliver its supplies to three hospitals in Baghdad (Ibni El Nefs Cardiology Hospital, El Wahsati Plastic Surgery Hospital and the Central Children's Hospital), to overnight in Baghdad, and to return to Turkey on April 30. Pearson